

outside diameter of said cylindrical surface of said connecting head, a passage extending centrally through said metal pipe from said first end to said second end, portions of said passage within said connecting head defining an annular groove spaced from said first end, and

a unitarily formed sleeve washer having opposite first and second ends, a first portion of said sleeve washer extending from said first end toward said second end thereof having a first cylindrical inner surface surrounding and closely engaging at least a portion of said cylindrical surface of said connecting head, a second portion of said sleeve washer extending from said second end thereof toward the first end having a second cylindrical inner surface surrounding and closely engaging portions of said cylindrical body adjacent said connecting head and an inner bearing surface extending between said first and second cylindrical inner surfaces and closely engaging the bearing surface of said connecting head, said sleeve washer further having a cylindrical outer surface facing oppositely from said first and second cylindrical inner surfaces and extending substantially from said first end of said sleeve washer to a location aligned with said second cylindrical inner surface of said sleeve washer, first said portion of said sleeve washer defining a first radial thickness and said second portion of said sleeve washer defining a second radial thickness, said second radial thickness being greater than said first radial thickness, and an annular outer bearing surface extending substantially orthogonally to said second cylindrical inner surface and facing second end of said sleeve washer.

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#### **REMARKS**

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Claims 5-14 remain in the application. Independent claim 5 is the only independent claim and has been amended to define the invention more clearly.